

Homeless: Peel gets a move on

Housing for the homeless in Peel is in the headlines. A group called the 20,000 Homes Campaign plans to count the numbers of homeless people in Peel, and to get to know their names. At this point, nobody knows how many folk live in the woods in Peel, or in underground garages, reside in cars, stay with friends for a few days at a time and then move on.

Our Place Peel provides emergency shelter for youth 16 to 21, and plans to expand from its present 14-bed facility in Mississauga to another 24 beds in Brampton. It turned away more than 400 young people last year.

Peel's Housing and Homelessness Plan aims at reaching a point where "Everyone has a home and homelessness is eliminated," by 2024.

A group attached to Peel Poverty Action Group wants to build an Empowerment Centre for Women, to house and help the residents of Brampton, noting that all women's shelters in Peel are in Mississauga.

Peel's Wilkinson Road Shelter for men has bunk beds stacked two up, for 110 men. No change there and nobody is ever turned away.

BY MICHELLE BILEK

Housing First is a successful and transformational housing plan used in several Canadian and U.S. communities.

Peel Region has a 10-year plan to eradicate homelessness and place all homeless people in permanent housing – the basis for a successful community plan. Unfortunately the Region has been slow to implement a Housing First model.

Housing First makes a priority of a rapid and direct move from homelessness to housing, instead of requiring people to complete a series of steps before permanent housing is arranged.

There are four core principles to Housing First:

1. individual choice and self-determination to housing options;
2. immediate access to permanent housing with supports in place to sustain residency;
3. housing is not conditional on sobriety, or program participation;
4. social inclusion, self-sufficiency and an improved quality of life and health is the goal -- to be attained as soon as possible.

Placing individuals into housing is a social and economic win. Stable housing gives people a sense of pride, confidence, skill building, security of self and possessions.

Housing is a basic human need, providing many social benefits like access to services, financial aid, and employment based on address.

For government, it is a fiscal win.

It has been proven that an individual costs taxpayers more than three times the cost of implementing a Housing First system.

The cost of incarceration, hospital visits, social service delivery, temporary shelter, law enforcement and the repetitive cycle of all of the above is a costly mistake.

Housing First is a moral, ethical, and financial success.

There has been work and knowledge in Peel. But the slow coordination and hesitation has caused many local poverty reduction advocates such as PPAG (Peel Poverty Action Group) and the Region of Peel's Poverty Reduction Strategy Group to take an initiative of their own. These groups incorporate service providers, concerned citizens and people who are or have been, homeless.

Peel Region is examining the 20,000 Homes Campaign of the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (CAEH).

The Campaign is a national movement of communities working together to provide permanent housing for 20,000 of Canada's most vulnerable.

(Continued on p. 6)



Two trees tell a housing story. Artist Leo Dias says his 24" X 36" acrylic "Last Trees Standing" was inspired by the idea of being steadfast in the face of adversity. "These trees grow just outside Orangeville on the edge of what once was farmland, but which is slated for more urban development. They just had this amazing resilience and beauty about them despite all of the construction and destruction around them," Dias says.



PEEL REGIONAL LABOUR COUNCIL

4th annual Labour Day picnic

FREE barbecue, summer fun games and activities for kids and adults
Saturday, September 5, 2015
Noon to 4 p.m. (food served to 2 p.m.)

A non-perishable food donation to Knights Table would be appreciated

Heart Lake Conservation Area
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(exit 410 at Sandalwood Parkway East)

Did You Know?

PEEL POVERTY ACTION GROUP

Peel Poverty Action Group (PPAG) is open to every individual and organization in Peel Region that cares about what poverty does to people.

It provides a safe place where people who are cash-poor and those who try to help them are encouraged to speak out.-- and Tough Times is part of that safe place.

The Group's mandate is to advocate for people in need and to educate the public about poverty issues.

Membership is free. Meetings take place at 9.15 a.m. the second Thursday of every month, alternately in Mississauga or Brampton.

www.ppag.wordpress.com

Homeless: The Video

Spaces and Places: Uncovering Homelessness in the Region of Peel is a 15-minute video in which homeless people describe their experiences.

A team from PPAG including a once-homeless person, will show the video to a group on request. There is no charge.

To book a showing contact ppagactiongroup@gmail.com. Allow about 45 minutes for the video and discussion.

The video was made by a team from York University, in cooperation with the Social Planning Council of Peel, financed by a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

Download at:
<http://ppag.wordpress.com/spaces-and-places-video/>



Down-Turn Abbey

Boom in Boomers

You'd think with the baby boomers reaching retirement age, that there'd be more jobs for nurses. Not so.

I took a two-year practical nursing course, paying for it through Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP). I'm qualified to give injections, medication, personal care. About the only thing I'm not to do is take blood.

Agencies hire me for two days at a time. I'm still looking for a permanent job so that I can repay OSAP.

I would like to go back to school to upgrade my nursing qualifications, but that would take four years.

The government should create more jobs, they need more nurses but they don't hire.

I sing in the choir at my church – Celestial Church of Christ in Imole Ajo Parish in Toronto.

Scorpio (not her real name)

Life goes limp

I was working in Burlington and hurt my leg. Some problem with the muscle. I have to find a job. I live near Shoppers' World, but I walk to Knights Table every other day to eat. I don't eat on the other days. I am happy that it is warm out. I was a supervisor in a food manufacturing plant. You have to know about food safety, good manufacturing practices. I have supervisory skills. But I'll take any job, as soon as my leg improves. Now I am on Ontario Works, which is \$600-plus a month.

Blaine

Work by the day

I've just finished a year in school, studying to become a community service worker. I have two children ages 10 and two. I'm not on welfare.

An agency hires me to work one or two days at a time and I can pay the rent, plus water and hydro.

I must wait nine years to get subsidized housing. I want to work, save, provide for my kids and their education. I just want to be comfortable.

The system is broken. I'm trying to get coverage for dental. If I were on welfare I would have coverage. I am being punished by not having coverage.

Ayinke

Starving myself

I'm 22, and going to summer school, upgrading high school courses in English and math, ready for college in September to study business management. I'm on Ontario Works. I have been doing general labour with a temp agency and helping a neighbor with landscaping. I was at York University, but found it too difficult, so I'm doing similar subjects at Sheridan. My Dad has a business with dump trucks and is doing well. If he can do it, so can I. A landscaping business and the trucks might work well together.

My daughter is nearly two. Having a daughter changed me. My grandmother looks after her. When we didn't have enough for food. I starved myself for a week so I could buy food for my daughter

Matthew

ToughTimes

Tough Times is published six times a year

Next issue: Fall 2015
Deadline for ads and editorial: August 14, 2015.

We encourage and welcome volunteer writers, reporters, artists, cartoonists, photographers, distributors and sales folk to join Tough Times.

Please email letters to:
toughtimestabloid@gmail.com

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Advertising Rates

Tough Times distributes 10,000 copies, throughout Peel Region.

Target audience is people experiencing homelessness, using food banks and soup kitchens, people who are struggling, plus faith groups, social service agencies, trades unions, business people, and the general public.

To advertise in Tough Times:
toughtimestabloid@gmail.com
Phone: 905 826-5041
Mail address: 4 - 287 Glidden Road
Brampton ON L6W 1H9, Canada

Advertising rates: (colour included)

Business card: \$75
1/16 page: \$85
1/8 page: \$135
1/4 page: \$205
1/2 page: \$375
3/4 page: \$515
Full page: \$655

A full page is approximately 10 inches wide by 12 inches deep = 120 square inches. E&OE

All Aboard the Brain Train

Brampton needs a university. How will it get one? You'll find out in the Fall. By then, the folk in the photo will have crunched the money numbers and be ready to "provide a realistic and achievable work plan and financial figures for a university campus in Brampton," says a news release from the office of Mayor Linda Jeffrey.

Essentially, Brampton wants to cash in on Ontario's plans to pay for 60,000 additional post-secondary education spaces across the province, so this "Blue Ribbon Panel" must also look at other post-secondary possibilities.

Mayor Jeffrey declares that she and Brampton's new council "are committed to doing everything possible to attract a university campus to Brampton," and the Mayor wants a "health hub," based on "the success of Brampton Civic Hospital, the redevelopment of Peel Memorial Hospital and the soon-to-break-ground ErinoakKids Centre for Treatment and Development."

Plus, a university could be an "economic magnet."



Who is on board?

Left to right, back row: Sandip Rana is Chief Financial Officer of Franco Nevada Corporation, a gold royalty corporation; Dr. Gurjit Bajwa is an emergency room physician with the William Osler Health System; Dr. Naveed Mohammed, vice-president of Medical Affairs, William Osler Health System; Daisy Wright, founder of The Wright Career Solution and author of No Canadian Experience, Eh?; Ranjit Dhaliwal is president of a mortgage brokerage firm in Brampton; Neil G. Davis is a lawyer, counsel to the William Osler Health System; Jaipaul Massey-Singh is vice-chair of the panel and chair of Brampton Board of Trade; Gurpreet Dhillon was elected to Brampton Council last year, works with youth, and is a "community ambassador" for the Brampton A's professional basketball team; Marilyn Ball is interim Chief Administrative officer of the city of Brampton; Ranjit Khatkur was a teacher and vice-principal in Peel, and is involved in social justice issues;

Front row: Terry Miller has been an associate director of education, a Peel Regional councillor, and vice-chair of Central West Local Health Integration Network; Martin Medeiros was elected to Brampton council last year; Hon. William G. Davis, panel chair, was Premier of Ontario from 1971 to 1985, and Neil G. Davis mentioned earlier, is his son; Brampton Mayor Linda Jeffrey is the instigator of the Panel, and a former minister and Chair of Cabinet in the Ontario government; Gael Miles was elected to Brampton Council in 1988 and elected Regional councillor in 1991. She was involved in bringing to Brampton the support centre Wellspring, helping people coping with cancer; Malkin Skingh Saini immigrated to Canada in 1976, runs his own small business Advance Kitchen Cabinets, and is a community activist. (Photo supplied)

WORRIED ABOUT THE FUTURE?

LOTS OF US ARE WORRIED ABOUT JOBS, OR FINDING THE HEALTH CARE WE NEED FOR OUR FAMILIES. WE CAN CHANGE THAT.

Let's work together for a better Canada

canadianlabour.ca/ontario-region

www.facebook.com/CLCOntario

[@CLCOntario](https://twitter.com/CLCOntario)

Canadian Labour Congress
Congrès du travail du Canada

Adoption: is it for you?

There are children in Peel who need a home with love in it. Doesn't mean there's no caring in the home they live in now, just that they need to be some place else for a time, or maybe for the rest of their childhood and beyond.

Peel Children's Aid Society is looking constantly for people who will care for children temporarily. And for others who want to adopt.

Interested? Phone 905 363-6131 any time of the day or night. Or if you have the internet handy, look at the CAS website <http://www.peelcas.org/fosteringAdoption.asp>

Peel Children's Aid says that all children need a family to provide lifelong connections that they can rely on. Most children are born into a family, with relatives such as grandparents ready to help. In fact, relatives are first choice when Children's Aid helps youngsters needing a family.

But it's not so easy to find caregivers for older children, or to place brothers and sisters in the same home.

Peel is home to people of many languages, ethnic origins, religions. Children in need are matched as much as possible with families with backgrounds similar to theirs. In Peel, that results in a real need for caregivers of South Asian cultures, reflecting the size of the population.

For adoptions, as opposed to temporary care, Children's Aid especially needs black and bi-racial families.

If you have thoughts of adoption but are not sure, talk to Children's Aid. They might suggest that before you decide, you become a caregiver and learn more about children and the effects they may have on the way you live.

Children in the care of Children's Aid range in age from infancy to age 16. They may be from "good" homes no longer available to them. They may come from abusive situations or have been exposed to the effects of drugs or drinking even before they were born.

Children's Aid provides background information and training for caregivers. The major qualification for caregivers is that they love children. They may need strong parenting skills to go with that. But a caregiver need not be married, already have children, or own a home.

Caregivers are not paid for their work, though they receive a fixed daily rate to cover the children's expenses.

Want to be a foster-parent or want to adopt? There's a police check in every area of Ontario or Canada or other country where you have ever lived

since the age of 18, as well as interviews with the Children's Aid.

But there's also a 24-hour emergency phone line, and access to training in such topics as: Achieving Harmony – Working with Birth Families; Depression and Teen Girls; Medication Information; and how to keep some balance in your life with children.

By the numbers

As of June, 2015, Peel Children's Aid Society had 416 children to care for by placements with families, in foster homes or group homes.

"We are always in need of homes as our hope is that we can get a perfect match for these children, so every child can be in a home that is a cultural and religious match," say CAS officials.

"We also need more homes all the time, as people tend to adopt the children placed in their homes and are no longer available to care for other children."

Children range in age from newborn to age 21.

"However, we are in more need for homes for children between ages 10-16 and for babies between ages 0-4. We are also looking for homes that can take siblings, or would be open to children with special needs. For adoptive homes, we are looking for people to adopt children over the age of seven."

Newcomers to Canada

OUT OF A SUITCASE INTO A NEW LIFE

BY EFFAT GHASSEMI

When Ellie and her two daughters arrived in Canada, their whole lives were packed in suitcases.

Leaving the world you know and foraging forward in a new country isn't for the faint of heart. Ellie remained resilient in the face of difficulties.

Her eldest daughter, Mariana, was starting school in September. Ellie didn't know how to access healthcare because of her limited English. Sophia was a toddler, which prevented single mother Ellie from finding a job.

But Ellie discovered Newcomer Centre of Peel (NCP) – a treasure trove of support. NCP had everything she needed, all in one place.

Ellie isn't alone in her need for assistance when first arriving in Canada. Many struggle to learn the official language, find employment and find viable housing. In some cases, individuals may need mental health or crisis assistance.

Caring for children can make these endeavors more complex and urgent. From English language classes, employment assistance and settlement advice, NCP provides new immigrants to Canada with the support they need to make the Region of Peel their home.

Like Ellie, a newcomer's experience at NCP begins with a needs assessment. It identifies a client's specific struggles upon first arriving in Canada. Based on this assessment, newcomers learn about NCP's various settlement programs and are referred to any services they need.

For Ellie, it was finding a high school close to home, getting help with government documents and navigating through the healthcare system.

NCP's childcare services enabled Ellie to attend



Effat Ghassemi
Executive Director of Newcomer Centre of Peel.

English language classes and build the skills to access NCP's employment services.

Each client's situation is complex and unique so everyone receives customized support.

Youth may fall through the cracks of our educational system, sometimes enduring bullying and isolation at school in a new country.

When Mariana started high school, she ate lunch alone. Although she had been part of the volleyball team back home, she didn't take on any extra-curricular activities here in Canada.

Her grades fell as she continued to keep to her-

self and not complete homework and assignments. NCP settlement workers suggested that Mariana join the organization's youth Community Connections program.

Mariana was paired with a Canadian youth and began to make friends. She joined the Photography Group, Karaoke Night and Girls Night Out events at the organization, received homework help at NCP after school, and her grades improved.

Often, the quality of life for a new immigrant depends on finding a job. Work to bring in money, or employment within their profession, or self-employment, For Ellie, NCP's eight-week Workplace Integration class gave her the skills she needed to become a contributing team member during her 10-week work placement, after which she was offered a full-time position.

With a job and her family's needs attended to, Ellie's new start in Canada began.

NCP helps thousands of new immigrants every year, and successes like Ellie's are not uncommon. With perseverance, a willingness to adapt and the right kind of guidance from agencies like NCP, newcomers are able to establish themselves in Canada and become active participants in their communities.

For more information on Newcomer Centre of Peel and its services, phone 905-306-0577 or visit online at www.ncpeel.ca

Effat Ghassemi is executive director of Newcomer Centre of Peel and has been involved with immigrant and refugee communities since she came to Canada from her native Iran in 1988. In addition to her duties at NCP, she is working towards a PhD in Family Relations and Human Development at University of Guelph.

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Visit www.themississaugafoodbank.org/getfood
or phone 905.270.5589 to find a member agency near you.



20,000 Homes Campaign

Continued from p. 1

The campaign supports building public support for ending homelessness, and political support for renewed federal and provincial investment in housing and support services.

Inspired by the 100,000 Homes Campaign in the United States, the CAEH has adapted the campaign for Canada.

“The 20,000 Homes Campaign is a grassroots movement of communities working together to permanently house some of our most vulnerable homeless neighbours,” says Tim Richter, president and CEO of CAEH.

“Homelessness is a solvable problem and we believe if we work together, apply proven strategies like Housing First, we’ll achieve meaningful, nationwide reductions in homelessness within three years.”

CAEH expects to engage thousands to participate in a “Registration Week” in communities across Canada. Volunteers will count how many people are homeless or “in urgent housing need.” They will get to know the people by name, and assess their needs in housing and health.

Communities then work together to house their most vulnerable and report progress regularly. “We are going to extract every ounce of value we can from existing resources to get people housed,” Richter said. “But to end homelessness in Canada we will need meaningful federal government investment in affordable housing units and support services.”

In October 2014 the CAEH and the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness released the “State of Homelessness in Canada” Report. The report outlined how additional federal funding of \$46 per Canadian per year for 10 years could end homelessness across the nation.

Peel Region poverty activists have begun their work. Service providers and local government leaders are on alert.

Areas such as Waterloo, London, Ottawa, and Hamilton have already held “Registration Weeks” and believe that Housing First can end homelessness. Will Peel take up this necessity as well? As far as our community activists are concerned, the 20,000 Homes Campaign’s “Registration Week” will happen in Peel some time soon.

For more information on the CAEH, Housing First, or the 20,000 Homes Campaign visit the CAEH website at: www.caeh.ca or www.20KHomes.ca or phone 647-300-1515

Michelle Bilek is a member of Peel Poverty Strategy Committee, Peel Poverty Action Group, Peel’s Regional Diversity Roundtable, and other local organizations. She is running in the coming federal election for the New Democratic Party in Mississauga-Erin Mills.

Escape from work on the streets

Peel Poverty Action Group (PPAG) thinks that Brampton may need a place for sex trade workers and homeless women to get their lives back together.

A working team has been set up to find out what’s needed – housing is a first, with supports involving mental health and job training listed so far.

Naming the project “Women’s Empowerment Centre”, the team will ask for a grant to finance a feasibility study, and plans to talk to all the women they can contact who might use the Centre.

Team members include:

A woman who was homeless and lived in a shelter as a young person; a parent of teenagers seeing the chal-

lenges faced by other teens, young women and older women after high school drop-out, street/sex work, poor relationships; a person already working with people living on the streets, people living with addictions; living in Brampton and seeing the growing number of “street people” and sex trade workers downtown.

The working team notes that Peel has no shelters specifically for single women who are homeless or at risk of being homeless; for sex trade workers who want to transition into safe temporary housing; for women out of prison; for older teenagers and young women who are homeless or living in unsafe environments.

Priorities for women’s shelters in Peel (all located in

Mississauga) are: women with children who have been abused by their partner; girls usually in their teens, who have become pregnant and do not have family support.

Most of the people who live in mixed-gender shelters are men, most with some kind of challenge or disability or addiction, including addiction to alcohol. Women, especially LGBTQ women, do not feel welcome or safe in male-dominated shelters.

Women with children who are living in poverty are a priority for affordable housing in Peel. But there is no coordinated help for single women who are living in poverty, living on the streets, at risk of being homeless.

For more information phone 416-230-2129

Behind every changed life is someone who made it happen.



You can be that someone.
Get involved at unitedwaypeel.org



Together, we are possibility.



Let’s talk about SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

If you are on social assistance, or care about people who are, the Ontario government wants to hear from you.

PUBLIC MEETING

6.30 – 8.30 p.m. Wednesday, July 15, 2015
Knights Table, Unit 4 – 287 Glidden Road, Brampton
(east off Kennedy, two lights north of Steeles)

FREE admission, FREE REFRESHMENTS

You can be part of the Ontario Government’s plans to reform social assistance – who gets it, how much, and other ideas.

A bigger better Our Place Peel

BY KIM CHO

Our Place Peel provides shelter, support, and hope for youth aged 16-21 in the Region of Peel who are at risk of homelessness.

It is the only emergency youth shelter in the Region, with a 14-bed facility at Dixie and Burnhamthorpe in Mississauga, 95% full on average. In the last fiscal year, Our Place Peel turned away more than 450 young people because it was full to capacity. These statistics have been the same for years.

Brampton has no dedicated youth shelter, and no shelter beds for females of any age.

So Our Place Peel proposes to build a 24-bed co-ed facility in Brampton, for youth aged 16-21. It will keep youth in Brampton close to school, family, employment and their support networks.

Stimulating the work by Our Place Peel and other youth helping services is that more local youth use adult shelters every year. Youth are vulnerable and it is not appropriate for them to be sheltered with adults. Youth need access to housing and supports to stay safe, to find longer-term housing and to find a job or stay in school.

We provide a supportive environment with clear expectations and structure.

Our Place Peel will work with other youth-serving organizations to ensure that all youth in Peel who are at risk of homelessness have access to safe shelter and appropriate supports.

THE NUMBERS

- Our Place Peel and Peel Youth Village house 54 youth between them, but both places are in Mississauga and are full all the time;
- 50% of youth in adult shelters are homeless for the first time;
- Focus in adult shelters is exclusively on housing, not on supports;
- Youth need support to stay in school or find a job, as well as find housing;

PROPOSED EXPANSION

Our Place Peel’s proposed 24-bed co-ed facility in Brampton will keep youth

in Brampton; building costs are estimated at \$4.1 million, plus a site at about \$1.5 million; estimated annual operational costs are \$887,000;

Our Place Peel is working with the Province of Ontario, the City of Brampton, United Way, Region of Peel, and others to complete a comprehensive costing and development plan for the proposed youth shelter.

Kim Cho is Program Manager at Our Place Peel, Mississauga

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NDP PLANS TO KICKSTART THE ECONOMY

BY FARHEEN KHAN

After 10 years of Stephen Harper, our economy is not much better off. Today there are 200,000 more out-of-work Canadians than before the recession. We have seen many layoffs from our banks, our retail market, our public sector, and our energy industries. Too many Canadians are unemployed and the jobs being created are part-time and precarious.

Unfortunately, incomes are dropping and household debt is rising. In fact, Bank of Canada governor Stephen Poloz warned on June 11, 2015, “The vulnerability associated with household indebtedness is edging higher, and the overall risk to financial stability in Canada is slightly higher.”

Instead of addressing the issues, creating stable jobs, and leading the way for middle-class families, the Harper Conservatives have spent over \$14.8 million in advertising for its “Canada’s Economic Action Plan” programs that no longer existed.

Stephen Harper’s plan just isn’t working.

It is time we moved away from the old-time parties and to look towards a real alternative to grow, build, and strengthen Canada’s economy. Where the Conservatives offered Canadians a failed plan with wrong priorities, Tom and the New Democrats have a concrete plan to undo the harm Harper has done.



Farheen shaking hands with Local Business owner in Carassauga

We will lower the tax rate for small businesses from 11% to 9%. Small businesses are an integral part of strengthening our economy: the stronger small businesses are the more sustainable jobs are created.

We will also introduce an innovation tax credit to boost innovation, research and development to encourage manufacturers and businesses in other industries to invest in machinery, equipment, and property to further innovation and increase productivity.

We will also continue the hiring credit for small businesses. This way small business owners and entrepreneurs do not have to be reluctant to add workers due to increased overhead costs.

Tom’s plan will kick-start manufacturing, help small businesses, and invest in strong community infrastructure. Together we will create good, skilled, sustainable jobs opportunities right here in our community.

As I am out there meeting residents at the doors, I keep getting the same message over and over: Canadians want change. Tom and I are ready to bring that change to Ottawa.

Farheen Khan is running for New Democratic Party in Mississauga Centre in the federal election.

Call it carding or street checking

THE MAYORS ARE ON WATCH FOR YOU

BY BONNIE CROMBIE | *Mayor of Mississauga*

Following my election as Mississauga's mayor, I had the honour to be elected to Peel Police Services Board, the civilian body governing Peel Regional Police. I will serve in this role until 2016, and look forward to achieving positive and lasting results for the people of Mississauga.

Our job as Police Service Board members is to ask the tough questions of the police, while at the same time ensuring our professional and brave officers have the appropriate resources to fulfill their responsibilities to keep residents and neighbourhoods safe, and to keep themselves safe while on duty.

In recent weeks there has been an ongoing public debate, in both Peel and Toronto, about carding or "Street Checks". Carding is the police practice of stopping people on the street and recording their personal information in a database. There have been significant concerns raised about carding, specifically who is being stopped, and the collection of data.

For these reasons, I moved a motion during a Police Services Board meeting, seconded by my colleague, Brampton Mayor Linda Jeffrey, to undertake a full public review of the practice of Street Checks in Peel.

We continuously review all of our policies and procedures and this is no different. This motion was



Bonnie Crombie, Mayor of Mississauga

supported unanimously by all Police Services Board members. It will include consultations with key community stakeholders. It will allow us to hear directly from those individuals who have been affected by carding. Our goal is to ensure that Peel police officers

undertake responsibilities ensuring the rights and freedoms of every resident are respected and protected.

As the debate over carding continues at the local level, I welcome recent news that the provincial government will use the summer months to undertake their own consultations about this issue, and consult with community organizations, policing partners, civil liberty organizations, the public and others to develop a set of rules to improve the governing, oversight and accountability of these issues. I look forward to the results and recommendations that emerge from the work undertaken by the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

It is important that we provide our front line officers with the tools they need to do their job, but at the same time we must always, first and foremost, protect the rights and freedoms of all residents, regardless of race, ethnicity or background.

Bonnie Crombie was elected Mayor of Mississauga in October, 2014. Prior to that, she was councillor for Ward 5 (Malton and Britannia Woods), and from 2008 to 2011 was Liberal MP for Mississauga-Streetsville. She has a master's degree in business administration, and is fluent in English, French and Polish.

Peel Elementary Teachers' Local

etfopeel.com
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Representing Peel's Public Elementary Teachers.

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The cure for sickly health care

BY FAYAZ KARIM

If there is one thing that Canadians of all political stripes agree on it is our national healthcare institution. Canadians cherish our universal healthcare system and expect government to ensure the best possible healthcare system for generations to come.

Without good health, individuals suffer, society suffers and the economy suffers. So it makes good social and economic sense to ensure that Canadians have the highest quality of healthcare possible.

Unfortunately, over the last 30 years our healthcare system has become worse. It is time for a government that makes healthcare a top priority.

The federal government has an important role in ensuring Canadians get the best possible healthcare. Most Canadians say that health care is a top priority. The health council of Canada had this to say: "We cannot continue our disparate, tentative approaches to health care reform across the country."

The NDP is the party that brought healthcare to Canada and is the only party that's committed to improving healthcare for you. A modern Canadian healthcare institution must include home care, palliative care and prescription drugs.

Facilitating the desire of Canadians to age in their place of choice with integrated health and social care services, investing in not-for-profit home care for seniors and people with disabilities is ethically imperative.



Fayaz Karim

We must recognize the role of caregivers, usually family members and predominantly women who give up their own social and economic interests. That caregiver has to cut down on her/his work hours that will lead to income reduction, less pension and less savings. Caregiving for family members should be recognized as work and compensated.

Canada must also start living up to its responsibilities to our indigenous people. Poignantly, when we talk about healthcare there is usually one group that does not receive the healthcare justice they deserve, First Nations. It is past time to reverse that trend and start working with First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples to address their specific health care challenges.

Part of an effective healthcare infrastructure is the promotion of healthy living and dealing with the social determinants that exacerbate poor health - i.e. poverty, inequality, the lack of a proper job, appropriate and affordable housing or a decent pension plan.

These are all within the jurisdiction of the government and it is time that we start putting patients first, including prevention.

Fayaz Karim is the New Democratic Party candidate for Mississauga-Streetsville in the coming federal election.

CANADA'S CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY

BY ERIC GUERBILSKY

I have been deep in thought over past weeks, reading and digesting the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in regard to the residential schooling of indigenous children. Testimony and facts swirl in my head; over 4,000 children essentially murdered in our Canadian residential schools, 150,000 children taken away at the age of six or earlier from their families.

These children were told and taught they were savages. These children were starved, raped, tortured, murdered, and treated in the most inhumane ways. I've cried. I can't imagine the silence of their families and villages as they were abducted. The last residential school closed in 1996, within my own and most of your lifetimes.

The term that is being used to describe these atrocities is "cultural genocide". I believe this is an understatement. If you look at the numbers and facts stated by the commission, they are in proportion to the most terrible acts humanity has known.

The residential school system, as it existed in Canada, was a crime against humanity and all non-

indigenous Canadians have+ blood on their hands. As we reflect on the truth and the generational impact of these crimes, there is an inevitable sense of collective shame and sadness. True reconciliation as a society and a nation means accepting the responsibility to create real change both for our First Nations and society as a whole.

Some results of our crimes:

- Canada is the 6th most developed country in the world, collectively our Indigenous communities in Canada are 63rd -- on par or even behind the failed state of Libya that so recently endured a civil war;
- 33% of First Nations youth don't finish high school; Aboriginal youth actually stand a better chance of becoming incarcerated than earning a high school diploma;
- The life expectancy of members of our First Nations is significantly shorter than that of the average Canadian. In fact, rates of serious illness and epidemic disease in many First

Nations rival those in Third World and developing countries.

We have a duty as Canadian citizens to make real and lasting changes so that one day, and one day soon, these statistics are in step with the rest of Canada.

At the federal level, I pledge to move forward with the 94 recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. I further pledge the creation of a First Nations-led body to bring together indigenous peoples, government at all levels and industry to fulfill on the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Most importantly, the dialogue between Indigenous communities and our government must change. The conversation needs to be addressed as a nation-to-nation conversation where consensus through collaboration and cooperation rules the day. Anything else is unacceptable.

Eric Guerbilsky is the New Democratic Party candidate for Mississauga-Lakeshore in the coming federal election.

PHARMACARE – THE NEXT LINK IN THE MEDICARE CHAIN

BY MARTIN SINGH

For the past 50 years, pharmacare has been spoken about in Canada as a necessary piece that needs to be added to our medical system.

A national pharmacare plan would result in Canadians accessing all the medications they need at little or no direct cost.

Currently, three to four million Canadians have no medication coverage. This lack of coverage for many and inadequate coverage for others results in about one in ten prescriptions not being filled, leading to many citizens becoming more ill than they should, overburdening the medical system and increasing costs.



Martin Singh

A national pharmacare program would address this shortfall while decreasing the cost of medications to Canadians and to the government.

You would think that governments would scramble to implement a national pharmacare program. Unfortunately, that is not the case.

One of the primary concerns has been cost. However, stating that the creation of a national pharmacare program would be prohibitively expensive is a ruse to say the least.

Many studies over a period of decades, including two in the past six months, show that a national pharmacare program would not only provide coverage for the cost of medications for all Canadians, but could result in savings of about \$5 billion.

Certainly there would be an increase in costs as a result of covering the price of medications that Canadians need. In fact, that increase has been estimated at about \$1 billion. But many areas of savings are possible. One such area is in bulk purchase of generic drugs. We would purchase generic medications at a national level. This bulk buying for 34 million people will reduce the cost of generic medications so much that we will realize an estimated savings of about \$1 billion.

Similarly, we can change the way we purchase brand name medications from the current system so that prices reflect global market conditions, not just Canadian

ability to pay. This change would result in estimated savings of about \$2 billion.

From the above changes, you can see that we have already found \$2 billion in savings even after the increased costs associated with Canadians getting more medications which they previously could not afford.

Provincial governments carry most of the costs and responsibility for administering the medication distribution system. They see the need for federal government leadership on this issue.

The NDP is committed to a national pharmacare plan. We have an opportunity with the upcoming federal election to implement a plan that will provide Canadians with the medications they need while saving Canada and Canadians billions of dollars.

Martin Singh is a pharmacist and the New Democratic Party candidate in Brampton North. He is pro-business, an active Sikh, and a member of the Canadian Armed Forces Reserves. He and partners have set up a new company providing 400 jobs in 20 locations in Ontario and Nova Scotia.

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Older folk speak out

Thousands of people in Peel want the government to set up a program that will pay for prescription drugs.

“Pharmacare” is the possible formula for ending a certain choice for some families: “Will we pay for prescriptions or buy food?” Because some folk can’t do both.

CARP, the Canadian Association of Retired Persons, reports that members – several thousand in branches in Mississauga and Brampton alone – are in favour of pharmacare, partly because so many older people are af-

fected but also because people of all ages are affected by the cost of medicine.

Peter Howarth, president of the Brampton branch of CARP, also involved with Brampton’s Seniors Council Health Care Committee (60 local organizations) and with Retired Teachers of Ontario (up to 15,000 members across the province) quotes from research that a national pharmacare program could save \$11 billion or more in prescription costs, and even more in hospital costs down the road.

“And it is not just seniors,”

Howarth reports. “Many wage earners don’t have a prescription plan with their employer – in fact, 35 per cent of workers don’t have a health plan covered by the employer.

“It is a tragedy that is happening in Canada. Reports say that 10 per cent of Canadians don’t renew prescriptions because they can’t afford to.”

The organization is campaigning for the provinces and the Canadian government to work together to:

- Expand coverage to cover more drugs and to cover catastrophic drugs costs;

- Ensure equal access so that all Canadians regardless of location and income will have the same access to affordable drugs.
- Save money through effective pricing so that drugs are affordable and the system is sustainable.
- Ensure that Canadians are covered for the same drugs regardless of where they live in the country.
- A single drug review mechanism to screen drugs for effectiveness and approval for sale.
- A single drug pricing mechanism for both public and private payers.

Childcare - we can do better

BY ROSEMARY KEENAN

Parents across Canada work hard and make sacrifices to ensure their kids get the best start in life. An investment in children’s earliest years will literally provide benefits for a lifetime. Our kids are our most precious resource. Yet Canada is not investing in our children.

Childcare costs are unaffordable, and Brampton with its demographic of young families, is particularly hard hit. At \$40 - \$60 a day, childcare costs consume 25 cents to 30 cents of every dollar a parent makes. Too many mothers sacrifice their career goals because they can’t find affordable childcare. This leaves two-parent families with only one wage earner and not enough money to pay the bills. It leaves single-parent families with little alternative to social assistance.

We can do better.

Research by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives tells us that across Canada there are a million families with children under five where both parents work. However there are only half-a-million regulated childcare spaces out there. What happened to the federal government’s promise to create 125,000 new childcare spaces?

The fact is, affordable childcare helps families, and actually boosts the economy. When both parents

are able to work and bring in enough money to buy what they need, parents and children benefit and local businesses benefit. Workers pay taxes, which provides revenue for governments. Our economy grows by \$2 for every \$1 invested in affordable childcare.

It happened in Quebec in 1997. 70,000 more women are working since affordable childcare came to that province.

Studies confirm that access to childcare boosts women’s participation in the workforce, provides women with opportunities to improve their professional skills, contributes to gender equity -- and the child poverty rate in Quebec has been cut in half.

Ontario cities on the other hand, have the highest childcare costs in the country, and child and family poverty are on the rise. In Indigenous communities poverty and lack of childcare supports are even more extreme, with 78% of First Nations communities lacking regulated childcare spaces. Shamefully, Canada as a nation ranks last among comparable (OECD) countries when it comes to dollars spent on childcare and early learning as a percentage of the gross domestic product (GDP). Parents who can find a childcare space can pay as much as \$2,000 a month. There is no coherent policy, just an inad-

equated patchwork of services.

So what should be done? The Childcare Advocacy Association of Canada, and the Ontario Coalition for Better Childcare are calling on our provincial and federal governments to take a leadership role that recognizes childcare as “an integral part of a 21st century society”. The federal government needs to be a partner at the table with the provinces and territories, ready to work towards an affordable dependable childcare system, with long term sustainable funding.

With a federal election, we have a chance to make a difference. October 8th is annual Childcare Worker and Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day. Canadian children and Canadian childcare workers deserve our recognition and respect. Tell your federal election candidates to support a National Affordable Childcare system. For a strong economy and a better Canada, vote for childcare on Election Day.

Rosemary Keenan is a retired school principal in Peel. In the federal election, she is running for the New Democratic Party in Brampton Centre.

Sources: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, Childcare Advocacy Association of Canada, Ontario Coalition for Better Childcare.

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